



PA Eastern Star Happenings



Issue 23 | Winter 2024

Led by our Service Dogs Committee Chairs and Volunteers, Sisters and Brothers came together in Elizabethtown to raise funds for and celebrate our partnership with Susquehanna Service Dogs



Scan the QR code or use the link below to see the new litter of puppies sponsored by PA OES Grand Chapter through the live camera:
<https://bit.ly/3SA4i1>



PA Eastern Star Happenings

Issue 23 | Winter 2024
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Grand Chapter of Pennsylvania
Order of the Eastern Star

Masonic Village
105 Freemason Drive
Elizabethtown, PA 17022
www.PAOES.org

Worthy Grand Matron
Joyce E. Plonka

Worthy Grand Patron
Robert F. Trimble

Grand Secretary
Virginia L. Plyler, PGM
GS@paoes.org
717-419-6084

Magazine Editor
Katie Lasswell Vitale
PAOESMagazine@gmail.com
724-771-6590

Co-Editor
Michelle Riggi Smith

Printer
Fry Communications, Inc.

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Thank you so much for all of the SPARKLING stories that you have submitted for this issue! It truly is amazing what we can accomplish when we work together.

If you are interested in submitting an article for the next issue, please use one of the following methods by the deadline of **May 1**.

Email: PAOESMagazine@gmail.com

Phone: 724-771-6590

Online Submission:
<https://bit.ly/PAOESMAG>

Or scan the QR code with a smart phone or tablet!



I can't wait to keep hearing all of the wonderful ways that our members are SPARKLING for OES this year!

Katie Lasswell Vitale,
PA OES Magazine Editor 2023-2024

ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS:

In order to continue the free distribution of the PA OES Magazine, one issue per household will now be delivered.

If you would prefer to only access an online version of the magazine available on PAOES.org, please request to stop receiving a physical copy by mail by reaching out to the Grand Secretary.

Phone: 717-419-6084

Email: GS@paoes.org

Mail: 105 Freemason Drive, Elizabethtown, PA 17022.

Note: If you are receiving this magazine in error or no longer wish to receive this publication, please contact the Grand Secretary.

Greetings Sisters and Brothers,

It is hard to believe that Christmas has passed, 2023 has ended, 2024 has begun, and Sister Joyce and I are in our seventh month as your Worthy Grand Matron and Patron. Our sincere thanks to the members who worked extra hard to make all of our visits, dinners and fun events the best ever! This holiday season is certainly one to remember.



The SPARKLE Fever is spreading. I am now the proud owner of 6 pairs of "Sparkle Shoes" in various colors. There are an unbelievable number of Sisters and Brothers joining me in wearing flashy footwear which is generating smiles that sparkle more than their shoes.

We are a service organization and providing service to our members AND our communities is another big part of what it means to provide a SPARKLE to someone in need. This year instead of having our usual Village Festivals we will be focusing on what we can do for our members through service projects at our villages. Since our Masonic Villages have restrictions in place on the number of visitors allowed, our AGCCM are planning service projects that can be done in small groups. I have been amazed by all the ongoing service projects that our chapters are coordinating around the state to not only help their chapters but also to help their communities. This is what OES is about!

There are some special "Service Days" coming in the near future: Share a Smile Day is March 1, Hug a GI Day is March 4, National Greeting Card Day is April 1, and National Volunteer week is April 21-27. Most of these service days require little or no money, just a little time to help someone or a group in need. These occasions provide great opportunities to reach out to members who have been absent from chapter meetings or to establish friendships with potential new members.

Our wish for each one is that you find as much joy, laughter and SPARKLE in your lives as you have given Joyce and myself this year.

In SPARKLING Star Love,
Worthy Grand Patron
Bob Trimble

Upcoming WGP Concerts	
March 23	Elizabethtown Masonic Village Sell Chapel
April 27	Scottish Rite Cathedral Coudersport

Super SPARKLER Spotlights from Worthy Grand Matron Joyce Plonka

Kira Brill, Harmony Chapter #58, was nominated for a Sparkle Spotlight thanks to her endless enthusiasm for OES, which she balances with a new child and a busy career as an elementary hearing support teacher. Kira joined the Order six years ago, and since then has served as WM twice, is currently serving as an AGCCM, and is always ready to lend a helping hand throughout her region!



Eleanor Irons, Friendship Chapter #551, was nominated for a Sparkle Spotlight for her kindness towards all of those in our Order. Whether by taking and sharing photographs, giving wonderful hugs, or lending a much-needed hand, Eleanor helps keep the bonds of fraternal and sororal friendship strong for Eastern Star!



Debra Houck, Perry Chapter #459, was nominated for a Sparkle Spotlight due to her hard work as Chairperson of her chapter's Ways and Means Committee, which included a bingo fundraiser that raised over \$5,000! Deb also serves as her chapter's Your Sparkle Counts representative, and has helped Perry Chapter receive the Your Sparkle Counts trophy many times over!





What's Happening at *Masonic Villages*

MASONIC VILLAGE AT DALLAS

Residents and the community gathered for the annual Oktoberfest, which featured a rummage and bake sale and local vendors, including Darling & Sons Farms and Greenhouses. Representatives from Masonic Village, Misericordia University, CIP Rehabilitation and The Meadows by EEI provided information about their services.



MASONIC VILLAGE AT ELIZABETHTOWN



Newsweek and Statista, a global market research and consumer data firm, announced their first-ever "America's Best Continuing Care Retirement Communities 2024" rankings, and

Masonic Village at Elizabethtown was ranked 15th! The rankings are the result of survey responses from residents, prospective residents, their friends and family members and employees. The community was also recognized by U.S. News and World Report as a high-performing long term care provider.



To celebrate 25 years of music therapy at Masonic Village, the department presented "Music Therapists in Concert" and coordinated

"Sentimental Journey: Celebrating 25 Years of Music Therapy," an interactive program recognizing staff, donors, volunteers, residents and alumni who make music therapy possible. Former students, interns and staff shared their memories and musical talents.

MASONIC VILLAGE AT LAFAYETTE HILL

A testament to staff dedication, Masonic Village at Lafayette Hill was recognized by U.S. News and World Report as a high-performing long term care provider, based on various quality measures including feedback from residents.

Amongst the many holiday events, students from Plymouth Whitmarsh High School visited for music and games with our residents, including holiday bingo and performances from different musical groups at the school.



MASONIC VILLAGE AT SEWICKLEY

Masonic Village at Sewickley was named one of the best nursing homes, retirement communities and personal care providers by TribLive readers during the annual readers' choice awards.

Residents, staff and visitors are enjoying a newly revitalized courtyard space at the Star Points building, thanks to community member Kate Steinfurth, who took on the courtyard renovation as her Eagle Scout project with Troop 9198.



MASONIC VILLAGE AT WARMINSTER

Thanks to Priscilla Chapter, Order of the Eastern Star, for hosting bingo for residents in November.

Save the date for the annual Spring fling on April 20! Support the mission of Masonic Village by bidding on your favorite gift basket.



Caring and Sharing Committee Chairs

General Chair: Debra Johnson

Deb is a member of Old Bellaire Chapter #375 in Carlisle, serving as WM twice. She is honored to be able to serve a second time as General Chairman of the Caring and Sharing Committee and is looking forward to helping raise money to support the Grand Chapter Fraternal Fund and those Sisters and Brothers who are in financial need.

Deb is a retired Federal employee and is married to Brother Todd. Their daughters, Jessica Whistler and Catherine Cunningham, are also OES members. They are blessed by their grandchildren: Matthew, Allie, Clara, Lena, Isla, and Nora. Deb and Todd are loving life in a senior living community and are thrilled to babysit their youngest grandchildren on a regular basis. Deb's primary hobby is quilting and she enjoys her regular "quilt camp" excursions with her mother-in-law and several other quilting friends.

Spending time with her grandkids brings the SPARKLE to her everyday life!

Western Chair: Patricia Longwell

Patricia is a 50+ year member of Kittanning Chapter #277. She has served her chapter in many offices through the years, including WM four times and as Secretary for the last 6 years. Pat served as DGM for PGM Anna Miller, on the 124th Session Committee for PGM Emily McCarthy, as Grand Warder for PGM Sandra Berkey, as Western Chairman for Charity 2022-2023, and as several other AGCCMs.

Pat is active in the Plumcreek Church of the Brethren serving as a deacon, church clerk, and assistant church treasurer. She and husband, Brother Jerry, have 4 sons, 4 daughters-in-law, and 11 grandchildren, and they love to have the family together for the holidays and special events.

Pat SPARKLES like a ray of sunshine by showing and sharing OES love to all she meets along the way.



Eastern Chair: Lee Ann Kingsbauer

Lee Anne is a PM of Lenape Chapter #339, serving as the Chapter Secretary since 2006. She served as DGM for PGM Shirley Capo, General Chair of Building Fraternal Families, General Chair of Service Dogs, Honors & Protocol for the 121st Session Committee, Grand Banquet Chair for the 123rd Session Committee, Fraternal Correspondent for PGM Emily McCarthy, several Personal Page appointments, and many other AGCCMs.

Lee Anne is grateful to her husband, Scott, for supporting her OES endeavors, her work as office manager at the Suess-Gahman Funeral Home & Crematory, and her work with her friend's business, Tilly Mint's tearoom, in addition to her church and community involvement.

Lee Anne is the proud mom to Lenape WM Stephanie Pearson and her husband Chris, and to Jillian and her husband Josh; the loving daughter of Joan Suess, 60+ year member of Lenape; and doting grandmother of Jackson and Parker. While passionate in her work and volunteerism, she really SPARKLES in Ocean City, NJ, where she spends much of her time.

Central Chair: Kathy Gracey

Kathy was initiated into Fulton Chapter #519 in 1991, and she served as Ruth and WM for three terms. She has served PA OES as DGM for PGM Mary Stillman, Grand Chaplain for PGM Orpha Kemmler and PGP George Camlin, and several other AGCCMs.

Kathy and her husband Ed live in Waterfall, PA with their Miniature Schnauzer Lily. She has 2 daughters: Beth in FL and Maryjean in TN. Kathy has SPARKLED all her life by taking care of others.

Kathy is so proud and grateful for the support of the local community and the stellar chapter appointments that helped the Central Caring and Sharing Bingo event to SPARKLE for our members in need of Fraternal Support!

Fraternal Gathering General Chair: Tammie Lasswell

Tammie joined OES in 1987, and served as WM of Irwin Chapter #400 in 1999-2000. She loves that three generations of her family are members. She has kept very active through a variety of appointments, including DDGM in 2003-04, Secretary for the 119th Sessions, and Grand Electa in 2016-17. She works in the Special Education office at a local school district, and enjoys reading, baking, traveling, and spending time with family and friends. Her SPARKLING moment this year was the day spent building bridges between Grand Lodge and Grand Chapter of PA!

Gathering of the States Committee Chairs

General Chair: Bonnie Shalala

Bonnie was initiated into Kane Chapter #165 in 1974, and served as WM. After moving to Philadelphia, Bonnie affiliated with Signet Chapter #129, and is serving her fifth WM term. She has served as Grand Page in 1981, DDGM in 1991, several AGCCMs, and on Sessions Committee for PGM Diana Michael. She proudly served as Grand Adah for PGM Anna Miller and PGP Monte Kemmler. Bonnie is grateful for the opportunity to share PA SPARKLE with members from other states this year.

Bonnie taught first grade after graduating from Edinboro State University before moving to Philadelphia and becoming a tax paralegal, and later a research librarian in a law firm. She married her husband Bob in 1982, and they enjoyed 35 wonderful years until lung cancer took him to his heavenly home.

She shares SPARKLE and love by just being kind, since you never know when a small act of kindness could turn someone's darkest day into a day of hope and sunshine.



Co-Chair: Kelli Messing

Kelli Messing currently serves as Esther in Freeland Chapter #323. She has previously served as WM twice and was DGM in 2019-21. Kelli has served as an AGCCM many times during her 19 years as a member of OES.

Kelli works for naviHealth as a Clinical Team Manager supervising a team of Skilled Inpatient Care Coordinators in Southeastern PA and DE. She is a licensed Occupational Therapist with 13 years in Skilled Nursing Facilities before joining naviHealth in 2019.

Kelli and her husband Ben, WP of Freeland Chapter, live in Downingtown with their children, Sam and Sarah, and their Corgi Brownie.

Golden Stars Committee Chairs

General Chair: Toni Younkin

Toni is a proud 43-year member of Monessen Chapter #205 and has been serving as Secretary for over 25 years. She served as Marshal, Esther, Martha, and WM for 5 terms.

She served as DGM for PGM Virginia Plyler, General Chairman of Caring and Sharing for PGM Mary Stillman, a member of the Wings of Love Club Board for PGM Carla Thompson and her Chairman of Pages. She has served as a Grand Page, the Personal Page for PGM Ann Hofius as Grand Conductress, and as a General Grand Chapter Page. She is currently on the Lucky Leaping Frog Club Board for AGM Marsha Holland.

Toni has been married to Brother Charles for 24 years and their family consists of 2 miniature schnauzers, Blitz and Stella, and cat Violet. She has worked for Duquesne Light Company in Pittsburgh for 43 years, currently as an Asset Analyst in the Operations Planning and Budgeting Department. Toni hopes to bring SPARKLE to everyday life by being as kind and caring towards everyone she meets.

Western Chair: Sharon McMasters

Sharon is a PM and current Electa of Corinth Chapter #229 – home of the famous hamloaf. She is a graduate and current employee of the University of Pittsburgh, member and lay speaker for Center Avenue United Methodist Church, a French horn player in the Penn Trafford Community Band, accomplished hamloaf mixer, and loving aunt to some amazing people.

Sharon is approaching 40 years as a member of OES and is grateful to be able to do something to share our love for our glittering Golden Stars who have given so much to OES.

Sharon feels blessed by her natural, church, and Masonic families because they have brought SPARKLE to her life.



Eastern Chair: Diane Beppler

OES is a big part of Diane's life. Growing up in a Masonic and Eastern Star family, she learned early what a fulfilling life you can have as an active member of the Order. She has been a member for 17 years in Friendship Chapter #551, where she was WM twice. Diane has been honored to serve as Grand Esther and Grand Representative of Maryland in Pennsylvania. She SPARKLES each day by having a positive attitude and looking on the bright side of life.

Central Chair: Linda Shoemaker

Linda has been a member of Robert Fulton Chapter #446 for over 20 years, holding a variety of offices and serving as WM twice. She enjoys the many OES friendships she has made over the years in my chapter and throughout the state of PA. Linda brings SPARKLE to her everyday life by being kind to everyone she encounter no matter what the circumstances.



Masonic Villages Committee Chairs

General Chair: Connie Wood

Connie was initiated into Triangle Chapter #483 in 1973, and is now Treasurer of White Rose #360. She is a three-time WM, and has served as Esther, Trustee, and various chapter committees. Her Grand Chapter service includes DGM, Assistant Grand Warder, Grand Page, several AGCCMs, Club Board Vice President for PGM Emily McCarthy, and Grand Representative to Sao Paulo Brazil.

Connie graduated from Nursing School at Conemaugh Valley Memorial Hospital, and is a retired nurse/school bus driver. She has been married to Jerry for 59 years, and have lived in Shrewsbury for 54 years. They have a son and daughter-in-law in NC, a daughter and grandson in FL, and a spoiled Mastiff, Zeus, at home. Connie serves on the church council for Christ Lutheran Church in Shrewsbury.

When not attending OES events, Connie is busy with the First Capital Ladies, playing pinochle in a ladies' group, and collecting snowmen. She reminds members that by keeping a twinkling star in our eye, we can bring a SPARKLE to our everyday life.

Western Chair: Kathy Henkel

Kathy is a 37-year member of OES, first with Imperial Chapter #537, and upon closing transferred to Sewickley Chapter #439. She has served as WM 6 times and held various AGCCMs. She is also a member of the Order of the Amaranth.

Kathy retired from teaching in 2003 after teaching math for 37 years, all in the same classroom. She has 2 daughters, 2 sons in law, 1 son, and 6 grandchildren. However, since she had 9 siblings, the 4 generations of her extended family is extremely large. Kathy's SPARKLE is generated by all of her loving family members and the faith that they share in God and each other.

Eastern Chair: Linda Jolly

Linda is a PM of Calypso Chapter #163 and is excited to serve as the Eastern Chair for Masonic Villages this year. She has served as WM 4 times and held many appointments, including DGM in 2010-11 and Grand Organist in 2017-18.

Linda is a retired German and Social Studies teacher. She is an active worker with Pennsylvania Rainbow. In her spare time, she rides her motorcycle, reads, plays the piano, and does needlework.

Linda has been married to Doug for 37 years and they have two daughters who belong to OES, Amanda, an electrical engineer in Germany, and Diana, a Past Grand Worthy Advisor, and currently in the line at Calypso. She has two adorable cats, Butch and Sundance.

Linda believes that we all can bring SPARKLE to every day by smiling at all we meet and looking on the bright side of life.

Central Chair: Linda May

Linda was OES in 2002. She served three terms as WM for White Rose Chapter #360, and was DGM for PGM Mary Stillman. She served as Central Chair for Fraternal for PGM Sandra Berkey, as Co-Chair of 128th Sessions for PGM Linda Dimino, and as several AGCCMs. She comes from a Masonic family as her father was involved in many bodies, her mother in OES, her brother in DeMolay, and herself in Rainbow Girls.

Linda graduated from Shippensburg University, and taught business in the Dover Area School District for 35 years. She was married to her loving husband for 46 years until 2023. Their family is blessed with a daughter, son, their spouses, and 4 grandchildren, with whom Linda is actively involved and loving every minute!

Her involvement in OES has filled her with friendship and love for her Sisters and Brothers, and she hopes that her own SPARKLE encourages those in need.

Service Dogs Committee Chairs

General Chair: Tara Mondock

Tara is serving her second WM term in State College Chapter #388. She has served as AGCCM for Service Dogs and as Personal Page for PGM Linda Watson.

Tara is the Associate Director for Penn State Extension for Agricultural Sciences. She is a member of the local, state, and national Grange, the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau, and the Mt Nittany United Methodist Church where she enjoys volunteering in missions and community dinners.

She and her husband PP Marty, Lodge No. 700, live in Lemont, PA. Their twin daughters, Maya and Marissa, are Penn State seniors; and their son, Tyler, Lodge No. 392, and his wife, Gloria, welcomed their first child this summer.

Tara has SPARKLED this year by raising awareness and visibility for OES through partnering with Susquehanna Service Dogs, and working to support the student and community raisers of the Roar for More: Susquehanna Service Dog (SSD) University Park Puppy Club.

Central Chair: Betsy Lykens

Betsy is a 25-year member of State College Chapter #388 and a plural member of Lewiston Chapter #283, serving as WM 4 times between her chapters. She has held many Grand Chapter appointments through the years, including DGM for PGM Cheryl Wilson, Grand Representative to Utah, and Grand Esther in for PGM Sandra Berkey and PGP Douglas Fraley.

Betsy retired in 2014 as an Expanded Functions Dental Assistant after working for 35 years. She has been married to Greg Sampsell for 40 years, and has two daughters, Lindsey and Marley. A great SPARKLE in her life is getting to make her 8-year-old grandson Grayson smile, and she reminds us that every day is a great day to SPARKLE and spread love, joy, and enthusiasm.

Eastern Chair: Stephanie Pearson

Stephanie has been a member of Lenape Chapter #339 since January 2004, serving as Esther before starting her journey to the East for 4 terms. She has been invited to serve as Personal Page to the Most Worthy Grand Conductress, as well as PGP Douglas Fraley. She served as the Page Chairman for the 126th Session Committee for PGM Orpha Kemmler and PGP George Camlin as well as other AGCCMs.

In 2021, Stephanie married the love of her life, Chris, a big supporter of her time in OES. She is so thankful to spend her time with her mother, Sister Lee Anne Kingsbauer, who has acted as her mentor, friend, and confidant. Stephanie is a Preschool teacher for La Petite Academy, Lansdale, and works in the kitchen of Tilly Mint's Tearoom on the weekends. She loves to cook, spend time with her family, and is a loving dog mom to her rescue pup, Hercules. She enjoys Disney, Philly sports, time spent in Ocean City, NJ, and SPARKLING with her PA OES family.

Western Chair: Linda Jordan

Linda joined Warren Chapter #56 in April 2007, and transferred with the chapter to Youngsville Chapter #478 in 2009.

Linda is a 4 term WM and has served as several AGCCMs and as DGM for PGM Mary Stillman. She also served as Grand Adah for PGM Orpha Kemmler and PGP George Camlin, and was the Grand Representative to Illinois. Linda loves to show her SPARKLE through service to OES!

Linda resides in Tiona, PA with her husband, Tim, and Service Dog, Jazmine. Their son Michael lives nearby with his wife Michelle and children Deanna & Nicholas. Their daughter Heather lives in Phoenix, AZ.

Linda worked at Bluestem (Blair Corp) for 26 years, and she currently works as a teacher at Russell UM Church Daycare. She is looking forward to retirement in March!

Barbara E. Adams Ritualistic Excellence Award Testing

There will be another chance for you to SPARKLE and demonstrate your ritualistic talents by testing on the Installation Speech on pages 123, 124, 125, and 126 of our ritual. We have made arrangements for testing the morning of the Worthy Grand Matron's Honor Day Event on Saturday, May 4, at the New Castle Consistory.

Please fill out the Entry Form from PAOES.org, and send to PGM Barbara Adams as soon as possible. Many of you will be studying this speech for Installations in your home Chapters, so why not SPARKLE and join in the testing fun!

Share Your Sparkle Committee Chairs

General Chair: Sharon Wise

Sharon belongs to both Monessen Chapter #205 and to Loris Chapter #106 in South Carolina. She served as WM twice, as Grand Trustee, as a variety of appointments, on Club Boards, and on Session Committees. Serving as Grand Representative to SC in PA encouraged her to visit chapters across South Carolina, where she made so many new OES friends.

Sharon SPARKLES brightest when she is with her family and when traveling to new places. Sharon and her husband, Kevin, are retired, living in Greensburg, PA and in North Myrtle Beach, SC. Their children are active in the Masonic family: Jamie Jones-Rodgers in Monessen Chapter #205 and Zak Wise in Greensburg Lodge No. 225.

Sharon tries to bring SPARKLE to everyday life with a smile. She believes that when you share your smile, you never know how much of a difference you could be making in someone's day. KEEP SMILING, SHINE BRIGHT FOR OES, AND SPARKLE ON!

Western Chair: Joan Kriebel

Joan has been an active member of Clarion Chapter #267 since 1976, and is a majority member from Clarion Rainbow Assembly. Her family includes a daughter and son, three grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, and four-legged family members Luna, Pearl and Sir Henry Maxwell.

Joan has been a respiratory therapist for over 45 years, and is also involved in the Daughters of the American Revolution, Daughters of the American Colonists, White Shrine, and the Missions Committee of her church.

She brings SPARKLE into everyday life by showing kindness, helping others, and lending a listening ear.

Central Chair: Debra Crabb

Debra is a 35-year member of Lewisburg Chapter #394. She is a 3-time WM, and is currently Treasurer. She was DDGM for PGM Rhonda Johnson, a member of PGM Shirley Capo's "Limelighters" Club Board, and Treasurer of 126th Sessions Committee.

Debra is blessed with a large family: son Pete with wife Stacy have daughters Kelcie and Tiana, and Tiana's sons Noah and Nolan; and daughter Jayme with husband Jim have sons Logan and Brandon who are both in college. She is retired, but active in her community as financial secretary of Christ United Methodist Church in Selingsgrove, treasurer of the church's preschool, board member and deliverer of Selingsgrove Area Meals on Wheels, and volunteer at our local thrift shop.

Debra intends to SPARKLE at Eastern Star events by making friends and encouraging them to share their SPARKLE for OES.

Eastern Chair: Linda Shafer

Linda was initiated into Nazareth Chapter #252 in 1976. She served as WM twice, Secretary for many years, DDGM for 24B, and various appointments. After Nazareth closed, she moved in 2007 to Calypso Chapter #163, and served another WM term. She is also a plural member of William Parsons Chapter #185. Linda served as Personal Secretary PGM HelenBeth Vilcek.

She is excited about her AGCCM service this year because it can bring SPARKLE to many lives. She wants to remind all to travel so we can visit with friends we have made along the way, to make new acquaintances to add to that list, and to get in touch with members who have not come to meetings and social events for a while to offer them rides and bring some SPARKLE to their lives!



Did you know?

All members are eligible to vote on business and for elected positions at Grand Chapter. Our website PAOES.org has been updated! Check it out and see the new calendar format for the Itinerary events, along with flyers and map links to help you find the venues.

Cheddar Up is an online platform to pay for select events. This saves you a check and a stamp. The Itinerary on PAOES.org will have details on which events can be paid through Cheddar Up.



Veterans, Youth, & Community Service Committee Chairs

General Chair: Karen Crown

Karen is a 37-year member of Gill Chapter #12. She has served as WM twice and has been Secretary for the past 32 years. Karen was honored to serve as DDGM for PGM Andrea Love and to be a member of PGM Rhonda Johnson's Club Board. She will treasure the memories and friendships she has made along the way forever.

Karen lives in Newark Valley, NY and has been married to her husband Bob for 34 years. She has worked for 24 years for Dr. Diane Downton, first as a nanny for her triplets and currently as the receptionist for her dental office. Karen brings SPARKLE to everyday life by paying forward, as we all can spread happiness, give to those less fortunate, and love each other.

Eastern Chair: Sandra Ruth

Sandy has been a member of Fraternal Chapter #249 since 2016. She started her first journey to the East in 2017, and is serving as WM again this term. This AGCCM is her first state level leadership position, and she has loved working with everyone!

Sandy is a retired nurse after 48 years, but keeps her license up-to-date so that she can return to Haiti for another medical mission. She and her husband love nature and outdoor activities. They have two sons, and are fortunate to share their home with one son, his wife, and their three children, who keep them young.

Sandy reminds us that a genuine smile can make anyone SPARKLE, and can help those around us have a better day!

Western Chair: Catherine Taormina

Cathy joined Eastern Star in 2008, and served as WM of Woodlawn Chapter #164 in 2013 and 2018. A nurse since 1972, Cathy served our military in the Army as a nurse on both Active Duty and in the Reserves, retiring in 2014 as a Lieutenant Colonel. She also worked at Aliquippa Community Hospital and Magee Women's Hospital of UPMC, retiring in 2017. Cathy has been married to Lynn since 1972, and has three children, one granddaughter, and one great granddaughter. Cathy SPARKLES when she sings in her church choir and plays in her bell choir.

Central Chair: Carmen Ferber

Carmen was initiated into Old Bellaire #375 in 2011, and served as Martha and WM. She has served as Grand Page, DGM, Central Chair for Service Dogs, and several AGCCMs.

Carmen was a Surgical Technologist for over 17 years between Holy Spirit Hospital and Lancaster General Hospital. After receiving her Bachelor's degree, she now works for a medical office at Lancaster General. She received a diagnosis of MS in September of 2023 and has been blessed by the love and support from her fellow Sisters and Brothers of OES.

She shares her SPARKLE and love by sending cards of blessings and joy to all that she can. Since she is unable to venture out as much due to a compromised immune system, she ventures out with her words of love, hope and promise.

Linda Newill of Connellsville #247, as a member of the Veterans, Youth, and Community Service Committee, has made it her mission to show support for veterans in her area by getting the community to shine green lights on their porches or out their windows as part of Operation Green Light. Operation Green Light was started in 2021, and shining a green

bulb in a window or in a porch fixture lets veterans know they are seen, appreciated, and supported.

Newill contacted an art teacher at Connellsville Area High School (CAHS) who agreed to have students make a drawing of large green light bulbs. The artwork was on display at a recent concert held at the high school, which raised funds for the CAHS Patriots veteran's organization. Green bulbs were also available for sale at the concert.

The other project Newill spearheaded for veterans was having about 500 elementary school students write cards to veterans. The cards were provided to the Fayette County Veterans Affairs office for distribution, which was greatly appreciated in the community!





Top of the List

When it was time for his parents to move to a continuing care retirement community, Jeff Hoachlander immediately knew Masonic Village at Elizabethtown was a top choice on their list of options.

“For work, I had clients in all the major retirement communities,” Jeff said. “I would visit them all, and Masonic Village was without a doubt the best place with not only the best care, but also the most beautiful campus.”

Although his parents were unsure about the transition to retirement living, Jeff encouraged them to simply take a tour of the 1,400-acre campus. Following the tour, it seemed impossible for Nelson and Alverna Hoachlander to look elsewhere. Jeff’s parents moved into their cottage in 2017 and fell in love with the newfound lifestyle and community.

As Nelson navigated health issues, Masonic Village provided options for the family to consider. Jeff experienced peace of mind knowing his father and mother would be taken care of in the comfort of their home.

When the couple transitioned to nursing care in the Masonic Health Care Center (MHCC), they received the loving assistance and care needed for their specific situation. When Nelson passed away in 2021, Alverna moved to personal care for a short time and then returned to nursing care.

“It is just a beautiful place for her to be living,” Jeff said. “The staff here are just fantastic.”

The staff consistently motivate Alverna to participate in activities, which is exactly what Jeff wanted for his mother.

“The staff encourage her and take her out of the room in a wheelchair, if needed,” Jeff said. “She ends up loving it.”

Jeff and his wife, Debbie, appreciate how easy it is to visit Alverna at the MHCC. When the weather is warm, they enjoy taking her outside to walk the same trails she



regularly walked in retirement living. They also like to visit the Masonic Village Farm Market and take in the scenery, bringing feelings of comfort and home.

Although the idea of a continuing care retirement community felt far in the future, Jeff and Debbie decided to join the priority wait list for retirement living. After watching his parents’ experience with Masonic Village, Jeff feels confident and ready for what is to come.

“Masonic Village is the first on the list,” Jeff said, “no doubt about it.”

Jeff and Debbie look forward to the safety and security they know Masonic Village will provide. Since the couple regularly travels, they know it will be less of a hassle to leave their home.

“It will be nice to just lock the door and go to Mexico,” Jeff said. “We will not have to worry about mowing the lawn or removing snow anymore.”

After touring a few cottages, the Hoachlanders are excited to take advantage of the campus’ outdoor amenities, dining facilities and farm market, while knowing they are still close to their children and grandchildren in Harrisburg.

“We think it is a great place to not have to worry about anything,” Jeff said. “When you are here and start to progress, you have options and can still enjoy all the things you do when you are at home.”

Jeff and Debbie plan to continue visiting Alverna in the meantime, while patiently waiting to call Masonic Village at Elizabethtown their next step in life.

Learn more by visiting MasonicVillages.org or calling your preferred Masonic Village location:

Masonic Village at Dallas: 570-446-5658

Masonic Village at Elizabethtown: 717-473-0614

Masonic Village at Lafayette Hill: 484-535-3119

Masonic Village at Sewickley: 724-242-5099

Masonic Village at Warminster: 215-672-2500

PA OES Friends of Frank supports Toys for Tots!



This book was donated in memory of Frank Plonka "Friends of Frank"

Connellsville Chapter #247 collected books for the Toys-For-Tots campaign. Each book receives a custom label (left) honoring the memory of Brother Frank Plonka before it is added to the collection box for donation. (right)



As "Friends of Frank," Shiloh Chapter #153 collected Toys for Tots in memory of WGM Joyce's late husband Brother Frank. The toys were delivered to a Toys for Tots Collection Center in Northeastern PA, sharing our SPARKLE with our local community. (left)

Old Bellaire Chapter #375 donated \$651 to their local Toys for Tots, raising the funds from the sale of opportunities and 50/50 tickets at their 100 Year Anniversary Banquet. The members SPARKLED with generosity as they supported this important charity that brings joy to so many children! (right)



Gridley Chapter #324 was busy this December. The members collected many items for Toys for Tots and delivered their donations to the local distribution center. (left)

The Sisters and Brothers of Albion Chapter #22 gathered many items to donate to Toys for Tots this holiday season! (right)



Region 5A chapters participated in the "Friends of Frank" 2023 Toys for Tots collection. Our region is blessed to have Sarah Grace Litzinger of William E. Gelston #435 and granddaughter of Frank & Mary Stillman, PGM, as our hard-working Section Organizers who was able to share some amazing information. The Greater Greensburg Marine Corps League Detachment 834 is the official sponsor in charge of Toys for Tots in Westmoreland County, and our donations were part of the 2023 collection that helped 1210 families and 2703 kids! (left)

The Wonder Of It All Testimonial Luncheon honoring Associate Grand Conductress Debbie Helm was held on October 7 at the Elizabethtown Masonic Village Brossman Ballroom. Debbie, with her mother, Nancy Line, was thrilled to greet the attendees.

Good food and great fellowship were enjoyed by all as they were entertained with musical selections performed by Brothers Kevin Cooley, Eric Holden, and Douglas Shetron, accompanied by Sister Sharon Cooley on the keyboard. Sister Debbie was also honored by a lovely serenade from her club board, Debbie's Sweethearts.

Members of our Grand Chapter showed their support of Debbie's new OES journey, including PGM Emily McCarthy as Toastmaster and PGM Jo-Ann Lauderman with the response for all guests. Debbie was touched by the attendance and encouragement of her Sisters and Brothers, and looks forward to making new friends as she travels around our great state on her way to the East!



Community Service Projects and Chapter Events



This year, the Veterans clothing drive and the Santa Shop toy drive at Perkiomen Chapter #318 exceeded our expectations. Our members are so giving

and caring for our local community. We showed our SPARKLE through the amount of clothing and money we collected for the Southeastern Veterans Center, and through an additional \$400 donation to our local Veterans Brotherhood group. The many toys and young adult gifts were taken to The Open Link, along with a \$500 donation. Other local groups also received monetary gifts from our chapter. Making sure our community has a happy holiday is Perkiomen Chapter's hope and goal every year.



Sunbury Chapter #266 along with Lodge No. 22 sponsored another "Free Breakfast" for our local Veterans, First



Responders, and Police Departments. Our Masonic Bodies have been working together to host these breakfasts on the second Saturday of each month we are active for over 15 years. We have served over 100 guests and family members. Our local state representative, Joanne Stehr, and Mayor Josh Brosious were among the invited guests. The local Masonic Family works together to make this a memorable event for these dedicated men and women, and have garnered sponsorship from Weis

Markets, Giant Market, and Walmart. It is a great feeling to know that our Orders can accomplish great things working together.



White Rose Chapter #360 has been busy SPARKLING through supporting our community. In November, we collected donations of socks for the VA which Chapter Rep WP Monte Foor distributed.



White Rose has had an ongoing mission to distribute greeting cards to numerous agencies. Each month, cards are sent by our Masonic Villages Chapter Chair to members at Elizabethtown and those in other facilities.

Our Community Services Committee delivers packets of signed cards seasonally and in appreciation to police departments, fire departments 911 Call Center, and Skilled Care Centers.

The theme for December was "A Cap for Every Chair." 130 hats, scarves, and mittens, many of which were handmade, were collected and given to York City School District for the elementary Schools for students in need.



In December, we also held a cookie exchange for our refreshments. Plates of



cookies and a small gift were delivered to 8 local members who can no longer attend activities.



As part of their annual community service activities, Hershey Chapter #509 members supplied the Hershey Volunteer Fire Company with a buffet meal before their December meeting. The meal was greatly appreciated by over 20 company members.



This annual event started in 2018 with the first buffet meal, when the Chapter members joined the volunteers at dinnertime. The Chapter then

presented a check for \$1000 from GGCCM Ken Pineda, PGM, a member of the Support First Responders committee, along with the Committee's memorial coin. Hershey Chapter first met in the social hall of the old Fire Company building after it was constituted in 1951.

Hershey also made donations to the Dauphin County Humane Society as part of WM Jen Yesavage's special project. Items collected include dog food, dog treats, cat food, kitty litter, paper towels, blankets, towels, and cleaning supplies. Jen and her husband Paul have three rescue dogs of their own, inspiring Jen to choose this outreach for our chapter. Pictured is Valerie, a sweet little girl who would love to find a home.



Meyersdale Chapter #548 has been quite busy the last several months. In August, WM Michele Barron took her van loaded to the brim with donations from our members and delivered them to a Women's Help Center in Johnstown. In September, a variety of donated items were delivered to the James E. Van Zandt VA Medical Center by Donna and Jim Raupach, WP. Doris D. Robertson, AGCCM Service Dogs & Community Service Chapter Rep., also delivered a trunk full of food to the local food pantry. In October, we sold Boscov's coupons with all proceeds going to Service Dogs and we are still collecting the D dollars.

We held our annual Baubles, Bangles, Beads and More event on Oct. 27-28. We set up for the sale starting on Oct. 20 and spent the week displaying the thousands of donated items. The proceeds are always split half to the community and half to Meyersdale Eastern Star projects. We are happy to report that our sales amounted to \$2808! The following is a short history of our event.

Baubles, Bangles, Beads and More event started in 2013 to benefit the Relay for Life team at Amity United Church of Christ in Meyersdale. The idea then grew into a desire to allow the community to see unwanted items in use again and enjoyed by others. For 5 years, the sale was held with the community donating gently used costume jewelry, scarves, watches, and purses, and all proceeds were then distributed to deserving organizations in the community.



When a change in leadership was needed, Meyersdale Chapter then took on the sponsorship as several of our members were involved with the project from the start and did not want to see it go by the wayside. The community continues to be generous with their donations and support. One half of the proceeds are now donated to community needs and the remainder to Meyersdale Chapter Eastern Star projects. We plan to continue the tradition for as long as we are able.



Trinity Chapter #138 in Somerset has been actively collecting a multitude of items for our veterans this year under the

guidance of our Community, Veterans, and Youth Committee Chair Amy Winters. The items have been happily received at the local veterans' facilities.

The first presentation of over \$300 was to Meadow View Nursing Center in Berlin, Pa. on November 9 by Hazel Hillegas, Amy Winters, and Debra Kinney. The second presentation was to the James E. Van Zandt Medical Center in Altoona, PA on November 14.



Shiloh Chapter #153 held their annual Christmas party and gift auction on Dec. 16 at Ricardo's Restaurant. WP Rick Britten, Sr. was our auctioneer. Brother Rick did such a great job, that we even had a few restaurant patrons donate money and participate in our auction when they realized the money raised would benefit local Veterans. A total of \$343 was raised!



At our December meeting, Shiloh Chapter also voted to adopt the 10 Veterans housed at Liberty House in Erie. Each Veteran was asked to provide a "Wish List" which was used to purchase personal gifts. Chapter members met on Dec. 20 to wrap gifts and enjoy some holiday fellowship. Rick and Sue Britten then delivered homemade cookies and the gifts on that evening.

The Veterans Team of Harrisburg Chapter #552 accomplished their next mission! A big thank you for all those that donated to this Robert M Jackson Veterans Center event, which included a full Mission BBQ meal, as well as knit hats for all men, toiletries, undergarments/socks. While we took many pictures, this was the very best – the smiles on these Veteran’s faces show that we were able to bring some normalcy to their challenged lives. We are moving the needle. The Jackson Center homes about 20 homeless, disabled Veterans and provides numerous services to improve their lives. Chapter 552 has become quite active in their mission.



Gridley Chapter #324 hosted a Breakfast with Santa in coordination with St. John’s Lutheran Church, hosting 32 local children. There were games, breakfast, a

Children's Basket Auction, an Adult Basket Auction, and crafts for sale.

Since June, they have collected items for the Pennsylvania Soldiers and Sailors Home and Veterans Medical Center. Chapter Rep for Veterans Sue Decker and WM Marilyn Kacprowicz delivered the toiletry items to both facilities.



Members of Priscilla Chapter #64 celebrated the holiday season with a cookie exchange, organized by Donna Boice, rather than the usual refreshments at their December meeting. Everyone brought cookies to share, and many went home. Some were also brought to the Veterans Home the next day for them to enjoy.



Our newest member, Rich Hall made special Priscilla Chapter branded ornaments as gifts for all his new Sisters and Brothers.



129th Session of PA Grand Chapter "Strength for Today, Bright Hope for Tomorrow"



June 24-26, 2024
Erie Bayfront Convention Center

- Register today through your deputy! Packets, including registration information and event flyers, are available at PAOES.org or by scanning the QR code below. SPARKLING events to look forward to are:
 - ★ Let the Good Times Roll Saturday Night Entertainment
 - ★ Dande-Diamond Wishes and Sparkling Dreams Grand Banquet
 - ★ Come Sail with Me Monday Luncheon
 - ★ Sparkle and Shine Deputy Strut—Come vote for the SPARKLIEST Deputy Grand Matrons!
 - ★ Grand Chapter Gown Sale—Bring any new/gently used gowns to help clean out your closet!
 - ★ And so much more!

We cannot wait to extend a SPARKLING welcome to all of our Sisters and Brothers at the PA Shore in 2024!



Finding Support for Life

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Brenda Drennan, in-home caregiver, Gene and Kim Enck

Kim Enck began attending the Dementia Caregiver Support Group at Masonic Village at Elizabethtown several years ago to find some assistance with caring for her husband, Gene. In addition to sharing her experiences and gathering resources, she learned about Masonic Village Home Care and how their services could help caregivers.

About a year ago, she found herself with a broken foot and knew she needed an extra hand. She reached out to Home Care.

“It all happened really fast,” Kim said. “Frank was our caregiver three times a day for a few weeks. He got my husband ready to go for the day. As soon as I was well enough to care for him, I utilized Home Care more as a break for me for four hours a week with a new caregiver, Brenda.”

“I was impressed with the skill level and how comfortable the caregiver was with our needs. I didn’t worry about anything. They were quick to catch onto the routine we needed. They keep my husband engaged and busy.”

“To help with his legs and mobility, a physical therapist from Masonic Village Home Health worked with the Home Care staff. The communication is great.

“As a caregiver for a loved one, you’re often late to the party as far as getting help.

“Once I called Masonic Village Home Care, it was just a sigh of relief. I can leave the house and know everything is taken care of.”

“It’s good for the caregiver, and great quality care for the patient. Their staff is good at finding the right person for your loved one. When we have a scheduling need, they’re very good at adapting or changing their schedule. It’s very important in life to have support.”

For more information about Masonic Village Home Care services, call 717-361-4999 or visit MasonicVillageHomeCare.org.

Home Care is a non-medical service designed to support individuals and their primary caregivers with daily living and household tasks. Services are available for Masonic Village at Elizabethtown residents and the local community (within a 10-mile radius).

MASONIC VILLAGES’ ADMISSIONS POLICY

Decisions concerning admissions, the provision of services and referrals of residents are not based upon race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, age (where minimum age for admission is met), sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, limited English proficiency (LEP) or any other protected status. Regardless of your financial situation, you can afford to move to a Masonic Village! When you choose to live at the Masonic Villages, you are not required to turn over your assets; residents and their loved ones maintain complete control of them. Generous donations enable Masonic Villages to offer financial assistance to those who qualify. It is required that your financial resources are preserved for the cost of your care and services, and our staff will help you to identify all available financial assistance when needed. Fraternal care offerings vary by community. Contact the Admissions or Marketing Office at the Masonic Village of your preference for information on the living area desired. Visit www.masonicvillages.org.

